



U.S. Small Business  
Administration

## SUCCESS STORY

### New Hampshire DISTRICT

Release Date: May 24, 2022

Release Number: NH 22-19

Contact: Cheryl Croto, [Cheryl.Croto@sba.gov](mailto:Cheryl.Croto@sba.gov)

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### **SBA's 2022 New Hampshire Woman Owned Business of the Year**

#### **Jennifer Legere ~ A Place to Grow ~ Brentwood**



Meet Jennifer Legere the founder and director of 'A Place to Grow, LLC, a nature based early learning center in Brentwood, NH. In 2005, Jennifer's dream of becoming an entrepreneur came true. With an enthusiastic approach to discovery and creativity and armed with her education in science, math as well as business management and early education, she had all the pieces to begin her journey of opening a day care and preschool that focuses on the whole child. It also allowed her to have a career that allowed her to actively raise her young family.

In just a few short years, A Place to Grow not only offered her a career as an entrepreneur but all gave her a sense of self-fulfillment in ways she never imagined. She found a sense of place by providing a beloved resource for her community. Situated on 13 acres with a spring-fed pond and natural play spaces nestled in the forest, the early learning center focuses on a warm, loving whole child approach where children learn inside and out. Indoor classrooms feature an eco-friendly environment with a holistic approach to physical and mental health which supports the children as they learn academically. She introduces her student to any experiences such as yoga, art, weaving, dance, story-telling, music, and puppetry by inviting other talented community member in as special guests.



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Jennifer is committed to a healthy lifestyle and is an exemplary role model for the children. She gives the students a sense of community through partnerships such as a Community Cupboard that in partnership with a local Brentwood resident, contains food and necessities available to anyone at any time. The cupboard remains stocked and ready for those who are in need. She also demonstrates her passion for sustainable living by reducing the carbon footprint with the addition of solar panels, air source heat pumps, and reusable hand towels.

Despite great adversity along the way, Jennifer rose to the challenges and had the will and determination to strengthen and grow her business. A Place to Grow has partnered with many local, state, and national resources. When beginning the business, SCORE business advisors helped develop budgets and business plans. Regional Economic Development Center (REDC), an SBA lending partner, became an essential technical resource for consulting and funding when A Place to Grow was struggling with low enrollment and a new marketing strategy needed to be developed. When Jennifer purchased the business in Brentwood, 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Lending from Granite State Development (GSDC) and support from REDC completed the deal. The energy projects mentioned were funded by NH Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA) and USDA Rural Energy American Program (REAP) Grants. When business needed assistance due to the impact of the pandemic, the SBA Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) Loans were received and forgiven, and SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) loans were received as well. Most recently, Jennifer participated in the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses Advising Program with the goal of strengthening the business and solidifying the franchising growth plan. All these resources were essential to the growth and development of A Place to Grow.

Under Jennifer's leadership, A Place to Grow continues to look for ways to grow and make an impact of the community. The company is currently partnering with Harmony Homes in Durham, NH to provide affordable childcare onsite for their employees. A Place to Grow was franchised in 2020 with the goal of expanding their mission and vision of the school. The franchise model will support working families and build additional opportunities to add skilled educators to the workforce, all while supporting new entrepreneurs.

For more information <https://www.aplace2grow.com/>.

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